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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 ABUJA 000103

SIPDIS  
STATE FOR AF/FO, AF/W, AF/RSA, DRL, INR/AA  
AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE PASS TO AMEMBASSY MALABO

E.O. 12958: DECL: 2020/01/21  
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PINR](#) [SOCI](#) [KCRM](#) [NI](#)  
SUBJECT: JOS RECOVERING, LOOKING TO PROSECUTIONS

REF: 10 ABUJA 91 AND PREVIOUS

CLASSIFIED BY: James P. McNulty, Political Counselor, U.S. Embassy  
Abuja, Political Section; REASON: 1.4(B), (D)

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SUMMARY  
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11. (C) The city of Jos has started to return to some normalcy, but residents remain concerned that violence could erupt anew. Authorities have relaxed the curfew, with schools, government offices, and businesses starting to resume operations. Displaced people, who may number as many as 30,000 persons, remain fearful and plan to stay in temporary camps longer than authorities had initially expected. Vice President Goodluck Jonathan sent a message to the Ambassador January 26 that he was in Jos with Secretary to the Government of the Federation (SGF) Mahmud Yayale Ahmed and that the devastation was great. Plateau State officials remain adamant that all suspects of instigating the violence face justice in the state and not in the national capital Abuja, where federal officials may release them. Embassy heard claims that the confining of the military to the barracks in Jos was to ensure that soldiers did not get mixed into the violence, as some of the perpetrators had worn military fatigues. END SUMMARY.

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CURFEW SHORTENED TO 12 HOURS  
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12. (SBU) On January 26, state officials shortened the curfew again, this time from 17 hours to 12 hours, prohibiting residents from appearing on the streets between 6:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. Authorities loosened restrictions to allow travel and commerce to assume some normalcy. Businesses have started to re-open, while government offices and schools have resumed operations. Major North-to-South and East-to-West roads transit central Jos. Therefore, drivers and vehicles must wait at roadblocks during darkness, producing temporary encampments on edges of the city at night.

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SHELTERS REMAIN FULL  
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13. (C) Shelters remained at high occupancy, as many inhabitants feared returning to their unprotected homes. Others have no livable homes to which to return. Plateau State Religious Affairs Special Advisor, the Reverend G. E. Choji, estimated to PolOff that 30,000 displaced persons reside at 41 camps supported by the state. He noted that his government has struggled to provide sufficient food, water, and blankets for this large a population, expressing concern that they will need to do so for large numbers during an extended period. He has asked civil society groups to contribute food and supplies to aid the effort. (COMMENT: Choji's figures exceed those we have heard elsewhere, and his plea for help contrasts with the announcement by federal emergency management officials that they need no assistance. Embassy suspects that Choji's figures are more accurate than piecemeal figures supplied by others, particularly since the state wields primary responsibility for caring for displaced persons. FEMA denial of the need for help reflects the traditional Nigerian government tendency to shun outside assistance. END COMMENT.)

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ABUJA 00000103 002 OF 002

VICE PRESIDENT VISITS TODAY  
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14. (C) SGF Ahmed told the Ambassador January 26 that he and Vice President Jonathan went to Jos and that the devastation was great. They planned to return January 27 to Abuja to make a presentation to the Federal Executive Council on next steps.

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POLICE AND MILITARY PRESENCE  
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15. (C) Contacts in Jos told Embassy INL Officer January 25 that police and military units continued to patrol Jos but appeared to work independently, with no structured command and control. Currently, as a result of deployments ordered by Vice President Jonathan on January 19, military personnel outnumber police counterparts. INL Specialist also heard that SGF Ahmed had asked Inspector General of Police (IGP) Ogbonna Onovo to remove the Jos Commissioner of Police, allegedly because he publicly claimed during the crisis that Muslims had instigated the violence.

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ALLEGED MASSACRE IN VILLAGE NEAR JOS  
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16. (C) According to the Nigerian press, authorities have recovered at least 150 bodies in the village of Kuru Karama near Jos, including some bodies dumped in wells. Police contacts confirmed

to INL Specialist January 25 the mass killings at this village.

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TRANSFER OF SUSPECTS ELICITS STATE OFFICIALS' IRE  
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17. (C) Plateau State officials criticized the transfer by police to Abuja of 139 of the 313 persons arrested during the conflict. Jos officials demanded their return to allow the State court system to prosecute them. Chalya Miri-Ghali, a former personal assistant to the Education Minister and a Plateau State native involved in distributing relief materials to displaced persons, claimed to INL Specialist that the police would likely release these individuals, who generally had influential people behind them who could negotiate on their behalf. According to Miri-Ghali, due to the sectarian nature of events, "Muslims are helping their people and Christians are helping their people" to escape punishment.

18. (SBU) Acting Police Commissioner Ikechukwu Aduba in Jos told the press, however, that IGP Onovo ordered the transfers because of congestion he observed at the state's Criminal Investigation Department. Aduba insisted that the police would return suspects to Jos for prosecution after they completed their investigation. He criticized the violence, which he estimated had killed 326, and which he described as "an affray hijacked in the name of religion by demons with human faces."  
SANDERS